

**MINUTES
LGBTQIA+ COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING APRIL 18, 2023**

Present: Chair Steven Kovach, Vice Chair Jennifer Billingsley (arrived 5:37 pm), Commissioners Dan Barry (left at 6:47 pm), Sandy Aldieri, Dolly Haddad, Beth Shapiro, Cayes Jarda, Laura Timmons, and Assistant General Counsel Christopher Forte.

Members of the Public: Paige McLaughlin, Lindsey Heald, Derek Cartagena, Ayanna McKennon, Haley Stafford, Captain Lozefski, Sage Delucia,.

1. **Call to Order.** Chair Kovach called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m.
2. **Approval of the Minutes for the March 21, 2023 Regular Meeting of the LGBTQIA+ Commission.**

MOTION: Commissioner Timmons made a motion to approve the minutes for the March 31, 2023 meeting. Commissioner Jarda seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously at 5:36 p.m. Commissioner Billingsley was absent for the vote.

3. **Public Session on Agenda Items.** Assistant General Counsel Forte introduced himself to the new members of the public on the call. Paige McLaughlin and Lindsey Heald introduced themselves to members of the commission.
4. **New Business.**
 - A. **Submitted Applications for Proposed Events.**

- I. **LGBTQIA+ Movie Night for “LGBTQ+ (R)eligion” at Ring Theatre at Wesleyan. May 17, 2023, at 6:30 pm. (Commissioner Timmons).** Commissioner Timmons updated the Commission on the dates and times of the event, together with the proposed budget, and answered questions from commissioners regarding logistics. Commissioner Billingsley suggested adding queer ministers and rabbi’s from Middletown to the panel.

MOTION: Commissioner Billingsley made a motion to recommend approval of the event. Commissioner Shapiro seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously at 5:50 p.m.

- II. **LGBTQIA+ Workshop, Common Council Chambers, May 25, 6-8pm. (Brianna Skowera).** AGC Forte updated the Commission on the dates and times of the event, together with the proposed budget.

If you require special accommodations for any meeting, please call the ADA Coordinator at (860) 638-4540, (voice) or (860) 638-4812 (TDD/TTY), or the Town Clerk’s Office at (860) 638-4910 at least ten (10) days prior to the scheduled meeting.

MOTION: Commissioner Shapiro made a motion to recommend approval of the event. Commissioner Timmons seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously at 5:54 p.m.

- III. Queer Speed Dating and Friending! Monday, June 5, 2023, from 6pm – 10 pm at Relish. (Commissioner Jarda).** Commissioner Jarda updated the Commission on the dates and times of the event, together with the proposed budget.

MOTION: Commissioner Timmons made a motion to recommend approval of the event. Commissioner Haddad seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously at 6:02 p.m.

- IV. Pride Identity Flag Tie Dye Events on Saturday, June 24, Saturday, July 22, and Saturday, August 19 from 2:30 pm – 3:30 pm (Russell Library).** Ayanna McKennon updated the Commission on the dates and times of the event, together with the proposed budget.

MOTION: Commissioner Timmons made a motion to recommend approval of the event. Commissioner Aldieri seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously at 6:07 p.m.

- V. Gay Spirit Radio Documentary and Panel at the Buttonwood Tree. Date: June TBD, Time: TBD (Jesse Nasta).** AGC Forte updated the Commission on the dates and times of the event, together with the proposed budget.

MOTION: Commissioner Timmons made a motion to recommend approval of the event. Commissioner Shapiro seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously at 6:10 p.m.

- VI. Open Mic Event at the Buttonwood Tree. Date: June TBD. Time: TBD (Commissioner Kovach).** Commission Kovach updated the Commission on the dates and times of the event, together with the proposed budget.

MOTION: Commissioner Timmons made a motion to recommend approval of the event. Commissioner Billingsley seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously at 6:14 p.m.

5. **Old Business.**

- A. Review of LGBTQIA+ Karaoke Night in the Hubbard Room of the Russell Library (4/13) from 5:00 pm – 8:00 pm (Brianna Skowera).** Commissioners Timmons and Shapiro and Lindsey Heald updated the commission on the success of the event. Over 20 people were in attendance, and had a wonderful time singing karaoke at the library.
- B. Drag Artist Story Hour at Earth Day Event on April 22, 2023 at 1:30 pm (Commissioner Billingsley and Russell Library).** Commissioner Billingsley updated the commission on the event, that Hella Swagg, Rory Roux Lay, and Frizzie Borden would be performing, and the event starts at 1:30 pm.
- C. Middletown Pride 2023 (AGC Forte).**
- I. Pride Kick-Off Event on June 1 (AGC Forte).** AGC Forte updated the commissioners on the logistics of the event, which will start at 10 am at the pride crosswalk on Main Street and will continue to City Hall for the pride flag raising and Mayoral proclamation.
 - II. Middletown PrideFEST 2023 on June 3 (AGC Forte).** AGC Forte updated the commission on the progress of PrideFEST, which is going well. Haley Stafford provided a rundown of the numbers of sponsors, vendors, marching groups, and volunteers that have signed up so far. Performer contracts are being received, and AGC Forte told commissioners that we need more sponsorships and volunteers.
 - III. Drag Artist Story Hour at PrideFEST 2023 from 11:30 am – 12:00 pm (Commissioner Billingsley and Russell Library).** Commissioner Billingsley stated that contracts are in.
 - IV. Book Discussion at Russell Library on June 7 from 5:30 pm – 6:30 pm (Russell Library).** Ayanna McKennon stated that the flyer has been posted, and the new date is June 7.
 - V. Band Night at Wadsworth Mansion on June 22 from 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm (Commissioner Aldieri).** Commissioner Aldieri informed the Commission that Jerry's Pizza and Nora's cupcakes will have food trucks at the event. Oddfellows will be performing some programming. AGC Forte stated that Haley would send Commissioner Aldieri a list of sponsors for PrideFEST, so they can be invited to table at the Band Night.
 - VI. Pride Flag Tie Dye Events on June 24, July 22, and August 19 at Russell Library (Russell Library).** See above.
 - VII. Gay Spirit Radio Documentary and Panel at Buttonwood Tree (Jesse Nasta).** See above.

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VIII. Open Mic Event at the Buttonwood Tree (Commissioner Kovach). See above.

D. Update on LGBTQIA+ Commission Initiatives and Events.

I. LGBTQIA+ Commission Monthly Community Event Updates:

- a. **May 17, 2023: LGBTQIA+ Movie Night for “LGBTQ+ (R)eligion” at Ring Theatre at Wesleyan. 6:30 pm.** (Commissioner Timmons). See above.
- b. **May 25, 2023: LGBTQIA+ Workshop, Common Council Chambers, 6-8pm.** (Brianna Skowera). See above.
- c. **June 5, 2023: Speed Dating at Relish 6-10pm** (Commissioner Jarda). See above.
- d. **July 2023 (Commissioners Haddad and Santacroce, Game Night).** Commissioner Haddad stated that the Board Room is going to open on a Monday night in July to open for Middletown Pride’s event, and will give a discount on the entry fee. The space is capped at 30 people. AGC Forte stated that Commissioner Haddad can reach out to Brianna Skowera to create a registration form to be put up on the City website.
- e. **August 2023 (Will Kenny, OutFilmCT Movie Night).** No updates.
- f. **August 2023 (Commissioner Billingsley, Queer Swim).** Commissioner Billingsley stated that they had spoken with Recreation and that they are open to hosting this type of event, and could potentially host several throughout the year. At the recreation building there are mens, womens, and nongendered family restrooms that would be suitable for all identities.
- g. **September 2023 (Commissioner Shapiro, Karaoke).** No updates.
- h. **October 20, 2023 (Tileen Sebastiano, 80s Dance Party).** No updates.
- i. **October 2023 (Commissioners Haddad and Santacroce, Game Night).** No updates.
- j. **November 2023 (Commissioner Timmons, Thanksgiving Dinner).** No updates.
- k. **December 2023**

II. Safety for LGBTQIA+ Community in Middletown (Commissioner Timmons and Mangiafico). No updates.

III. Middlesex Health and Middletown Pride (Commissioner Jarda). Commissioner Jarda will meet with Middlesex Health to serve as a liaison between the LGBTQIA+ Commission and the Middlesex Health pride committee.

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6. Adjournment.

MOTION: Commissioner Billingsley made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Timmons seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously at 6:56 p.m. Commissioner Barry was absent for the vote.

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